crop approved by the Genetic Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC) for commercial cultivation in nine cotton growing States namely Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Punjab, Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu. The total area under Bt cotton cultivation is approximately 128,44,000 acres. The GEAC has also approved the field testing of Bt rice, Bt okra, Bt bringal, Bt tomato, Bt potato, Bt groundnut and Bt cotton expressing new gene events of which field trials of Bt rice, Bt okra, Bt brinal and Bt cotton have been initiated. The states where field trials of GM crops have been undertaken include Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Gujarat, Haryana, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharasthra, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamilnadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.

(c) Extensive Rules and guidelines have been framed for evaluating the environmental and health safety aspects of genetically modified crops. The GEAC also takes into consideration the results of the biosafety data, findings of the field trials as well as recommendations of the Monitoring cum Evaluation Committee (MEC) constituted by the Government for evaluating the field trials of GM crops and recommendations of the Indian Council of Agriculture Research (ICAR) before approving the GM crop for commercial cultivation. Only those transgenic crops which are found to be safe for human consumption as well as the environment are approved for commercial release.

Study of sea behaviour

453. MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR:
SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether a Central team has visited Orissa coastal region to study the sea behaviour *i.e.* its advancement towards the land along the Puri coast etc.;

(b) whether the sea has washed away some newly built roads along the Marine Drive posing serious threat to a number of new hotels and apartments coming up along the coast; and

(c) if so, the details of the study so conducted *inter-alia* indicating the action plan of Government to address this problem?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on Table of the House.

Contamination of water in Mettur, Tamil Nadu

454. SHRI N.R. GOVINDARAJAR: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that agriculture lands in Tamil Nadu particularly around River Cauvery region are losing its fertility due to a private chemical company, of which hazardous chemicals residue begin mixed with river water near Mettur;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government are also aware that a number of people are being affected by unknown diseases due to contaminated water in Mettur area in Tamil Nadu;

(d) whether Government have received any representation regarding such problems requesting to take necessary action; and

(e) if so, the action taken thereon?